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A RAND NOTE

**Ethnic Dynamics and Dilemmas of the
Russian Republic**

Paul B. Henze

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Ethnic Dynamics and Dilemmas of the Russian Republic

Paul B. Henze

Prepared for the
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

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PREFACE

Ethnic tension and movements for greater autonomy, sovereignty, and in many cases independence for Soviet ethnic groups expanded with surprising speed during the late 1980s and early 1990s. These developments profoundly affected the Russian Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR), as well as the other 14 republics of the Soviet Union. Russians are no longer united in their commitment to maintain the Soviet system. Nor does any effective majority among them seek to preserve the communist system in their own republic.

This Note analyzes the ethnic and regional interests that are increasingly affecting all dimensions of Russian life.¹ It does not attempt to assess the entire process, but rather to present basic ethnic data, identify trends, and point to likely future developments. The study draws on a broad body of scholarly work, analyses in Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's weekly *Report on the USSR*, current Soviet and Western press reporting, and Soviet 1989 census data. It also reflects the author's travels and conversations in 1988 and 1989 in the Soviet Union, and discussion sessions with Russian political activists at the National Endowment for Democracy, the Woodrow Wilson Center, and RAND in Washington during 1989 and 1990.

The research for the Note was conducted in 1990 under the sponsorship of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy by RAND's International Security and Defense Strategy Program. The program is part of RAND's National Defense Research Institute, a federally funded research and development center sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff. The author has followed ethnic developments in the Soviet Union and China since the 1950s and published extensively on them.

¹A companion Note offers a similar analysis of ethnic and regional unrest in the three Transcaucasian republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia; see Paul B. Henze, *The Transcaucasus in Transition*, RAND, N-3212-USDP, 1991.

SUMMARY

The Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR), which contains 51.5 percent of the USSR's population, has emerged as a key factor in the political and economic ferment that is undermining the very existence of the Soviet Union. The election of Boris Yeltsin as RSFSR president in June 1991 marked a decisive step in the decline of Mikhail Gorbachev's primacy and a new stage in the process of reform and democratization, the consequences of which we are only beginning to see. Though the RSFSR's population is over 80 percent Russian and over 85 percent Slavic, the republic confronts almost as many problems of ethnic and regional self-assertion as the USSR as a whole.

The 21 million non-Slavs who live in the RSFSR occupy strategic border regions and economically critical areas. Most of them are jealous of their territorial autonomy, even though the system of union and autonomous republics and two kinds of autonomous districts has in many respects become anachronistic and illogical.

As in the Transcaucasian republics to the south, Muslim nationalities in Dagestan are moving toward independence. Tatars, the largest Muslim nationality in the RSFSR, are increasingly self-assertive, even though three-quarters of them live outside their own republic's borders. The distant Tuvans, who are Mongols and live in territory once Chinese, have spawned a strong independence movement. Several national groups have declared themselves sovereign. Nationalities without territory of their own—Jews, Germans, Crimean Tatars, Meskhetian Turks and Kurds—create complex problems for the RSFSR and its relations with other union republics.

Among Slavic populations, Russians, especially those living in non-Russian areas, are manifesting a distinct tendency to adopt Ukrainian and Belorussian nationality. Russian nationalism exhibits many facets and crosscurrents. Regionalism in the RSFSR may be an even more difficult problem for new democratic leaders to accommodate than ethnic discontent. Several Russian regions, with Leningrad in the lead, are moving to take control of their own administration and operate their economies independently of Moscow. They enjoy strong and growing popular support. In some areas, for example, the north Siberian autonomous republic of Yakutia, Russians are joining with other ethnic groups to press for greater political and economic self-determination.

The new constitution of the RSFSR, which is currently being written, must grapple with the problem of reorganizing this huge territory along lines that enable it to become a genuine, instead of a symbolic, federation. Events may be moving faster than the ability of even well-intentioned and popular democratic leaders to control them. For the foreseeable future, all of these centrifugal tendencies are likely to intensify. The USSR—and specifically the Russian republic—will be in a state of flux for a long time to come.

This Note contains 11 statistical tables which present data on the demography of the RSFSR and its components derived from the 1989 Soviet census.

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I. INTRODUCTION

RUSSIANS IN REVOLT

One of the most significant developments in the Soviet Union during 1990 was the consolidation of a strong movement for self-assertion among the Russian people, who constitute slightly over half the country's population. The election of Boris Yeltsin as chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) at the end of May 1990 was a decisive step in this process. A year later, in June 1991, the Russian people elected Yeltsin president of the RSFSR, making him the first popularly elected leader in Russian history.

With Yeltsin as president, the Russian republic, which is in ferment from Leningrad to Vladivostok, has become a powerful engine of change.¹ Heretofore, the structure of the Russian republic has essentially duplicated that of the Soviet Union. The two have shared most governmental and communist party organizations and officials. Now, however, burgeoning democratic movements are striving to create the basis for a total renewal of Russian life in all its dimensions: economic, social, political, and cultural. Russian democrats still face serious challenges, however, such as resentful communist bureaucrats, reactionary generals, KGB functionaries, religious conservatives, proponents of regional and ethnic interests, and apathy and resignation among some elements of the population.

Though the RSFSR's population is more than four-fifths Russian, non-Russians occupy strategically and economically valuable regions on the periphery, as well as industrially important territories in the Volga-Ural region that adjoin the historic Russian heartland. The non-Russians—and especially the nearly 12 million Muslims—who live in the RSFSR are reproducing at a higher rate than Russians. Moreover, more than half the area of the Russian republic is included in "autonomous" ethnic republics and districts.

Though many native peoples are minorities in their own areas, some have political leverage and a disruptive capacity far beyond their numbers. In some parts of the RSFSR, Russians are exploiting ethnic concerns—forming alliances with other ethnic groups and serving as spokesmen for greater autonomy of ethnic areas—to advance their regional interests. Most Russians now tend to give regional interests priority over national and republic considerations. In Leningrad, even in Moscow, in Siberia, and elsewhere, new Russian

¹In this Note, I use Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR, Russian republic, Russian state, and Russia interchangeably.

leaders have been taking economic management and political leadership into their own hands.

When Yeltsin resigned his communist party membership in July 1990, following the 28th Communist Party Congress, he made more than a personal declaration of independence. He, in effect, declared independence for the debilitated but still proud and potentially dynamic Russian nation. Gorbachev's temporary acquiescence in early August 1990 in Yeltsin's 500-day program for the implementation of sweeping economic reform was a reluctant acknowledgment of Yeltsin's primacy among Russians. Gorbachev's reversal and backtracking on political as well as economic reform in subsequent months marked a temporary, but significant, break with Yeltsin, ostensibly healed as of mid-1991.

Oleg Rumyantsev, a key member of the team of young democrats that Yeltsin has attracted, serves as a deputy in the Russian parliament and secretary of the commission that is writing a new constitution for the Russian republic. Speaking in August 1990 in Washington, Rumyantsev stressed the development of democratic consciousness among Russians and the erosion of Gorbachev's influence. He summed up the political evolution of the past five years as follows:

Andropov and the KGB are the real fathers of *perestroika* [restructuring]. Their aim was to reduce the likelihood of an explosion from below. The emphasis was on the role of the enlightened *nomenklatura* [party establishment], not on the strength of society. . . . From his youth, Gorbachev was part of the ruling class. He aimed to put a human face on the ruling class and bring the system into the "common European house"—smiles abroad and oppression of real democracy at home. That was the purpose of *perestroika*—authoritarian reform from above with the ruling class intact. . . . Of course Gorbachev did good things in setting the process in motion, but his era is over. He was still in first place in popularity polls in November 1989, in second place in February 1990, and at the end of May 1990 in fifth place. He has been overtaken by the new democratic leaders.²

The Russian republic and the Russian nation have thus moved to the forefront of the transformation of the Soviet Union, a process that observers abroad and activists inside the country now believe to be both irreversible and destined to lead to the disappearance of the USSR and its replacement by one or more new grouping(s) of sovereign states.³ Russian

²Comments during a discussion at the National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, D.C., August 10, 1990.

³Until recently, speculation on the possibility that Russians would tire of the strains and costs of holding the world's last major multinational empire together was unfashionable

nationalism is far from an orderly or clear-cut set of concepts. The enormous ferment among Russians finds expression in the increasingly active political life that *perestroika* made possible, even though Gorbachev's original concept has become an anachronism and he has begun to backtrack.⁴ It also finds expression in increasing disorder and periodic violence, a measure of the frustration and impatience many Russians feel at their predicament.

This Note cannot begin to explore all the ramifications of Russian nationalism.⁵ It aims merely to present basic ethnic data, identify trends, and point to likely future developments. Thus, it considers only one set of the challenges that Russians face: the ethnic and regional problems in territories regarded for the most part as integral components of the RSFSR. Long ignored or suppressed under authoritarian, centralized communist rule, these problems challenge the new leaders of the Russian republic as they try to rationalize and democratize the political and administrative structure of a political entity which, even if the other 14 republics of the USSR are excepted, constitutes by far the largest territory under a single government in the world.

The Note discusses the evolution and demography of the RSFSR and the rise of regionalism among the Russian people. Eleven statistical tables (six of which constitute an appendix) taken or calculated from the 1989 Soviet census supplement the text.⁶ Each

among many Western Sovietologists. The following observations, which I made under the subtitle "Will the Russians Revolt?" in an essay written in 1982 and published in 1985, were dismissed by several reviewers as the irrelevant musings of an unreformed Cold Warrior: "Thus Russians at most levels in Soviet society are increasingly aware of the pain and cost of operating a multi-national empire. Like all imperial peoples, they find that benevolent treatment of subject nations does not produce gratitude. Raising these peoples to a higher level of economic development, opening up new social and intellectual horizons for them, does not necessarily make mutual relationships easier. Some Russians react with scorn and resentment; some with open hostility; some with patience and dedication to principle; many with indifference. Russians have not developed a successful formula for turning non-Russians into Russians. Officially they have to keep denying that they are trying to do so at all. New Soviet Man has proved elusive. National feeling is intensifying, among Russians as well as non-Russians. They interact with each other and psychological barriers are mutually enforced." Paul B. Henze, "The Spectre and Implications of Internal Nationalist Dissent," in S. Enders Wimbush (ed.), *Soviet Nationalities in Strategic Perspective*, Croom Helm, London, 1985, p. 27.

⁴See John Dunlop, "The Return of Russian Nationalism," *Journal of Democracy*, Summer 1990, pp. 114-122. Alexander Solzhenitsyn gave enormous impetus to this debate in a series of articles in fall 1990; see "The Solzhenitsyn Debate," *Report on the USSR*, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), Munich, Vol. 2, No. 40, October 5, 1990.

⁵For a brief attempt to do so, see Paul B. Henze, "The Last Empire," *Journal of Democracy*, Spring 1990, pp. 27-34.

⁶See *Natsional'nyy sostav naseleniya* (National Composition of the Population), Part 2, USSR State Committee on Statistics, Informatsionno-izdatel'skiy tsentr, Moscow, 1989.

ethnic and regional situation merits more detailed examination, however. Several such situations deserving future research are identified in the text.

EVOLUTION OF THE USSR AND THE RSFSR

At a time when its historic rivals, the Austrian and Ottoman empires, disappeared, the Russian empire was skillfully reconstituted by Lenin as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. He was forced to make territorial concessions—independence for Finland and the Baltic republics, surrender of territory to Poland, Romania, and Turkey—to secure peace and gain time to reestablish control over the Caucasus, Siberia, and Central Asia.

To disguise its essentially Russian character and to facilitate the reintegration of non-Russian and non-Slavic regions into the new Soviet empire, the Bolsheviks gave most of the larger ethnic territories separate status as union republics (also called soviet socialist republics, or SSRs) and designated everything that remained—originally more than 80 percent of the territory of the USSR—the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.⁷

Stalin refined the system established during Lenin's lifetime and made good most of the early territorial losses during and immediately after World War II. The Soviet Union absorbed the three Baltic countries; took territory from Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania; incorporated Tannu Tuva; and capitalizing on its brief participation in the war against Japan, seized southern Sakhalin and several groups of Japanese islands (see Fig. 1).⁸

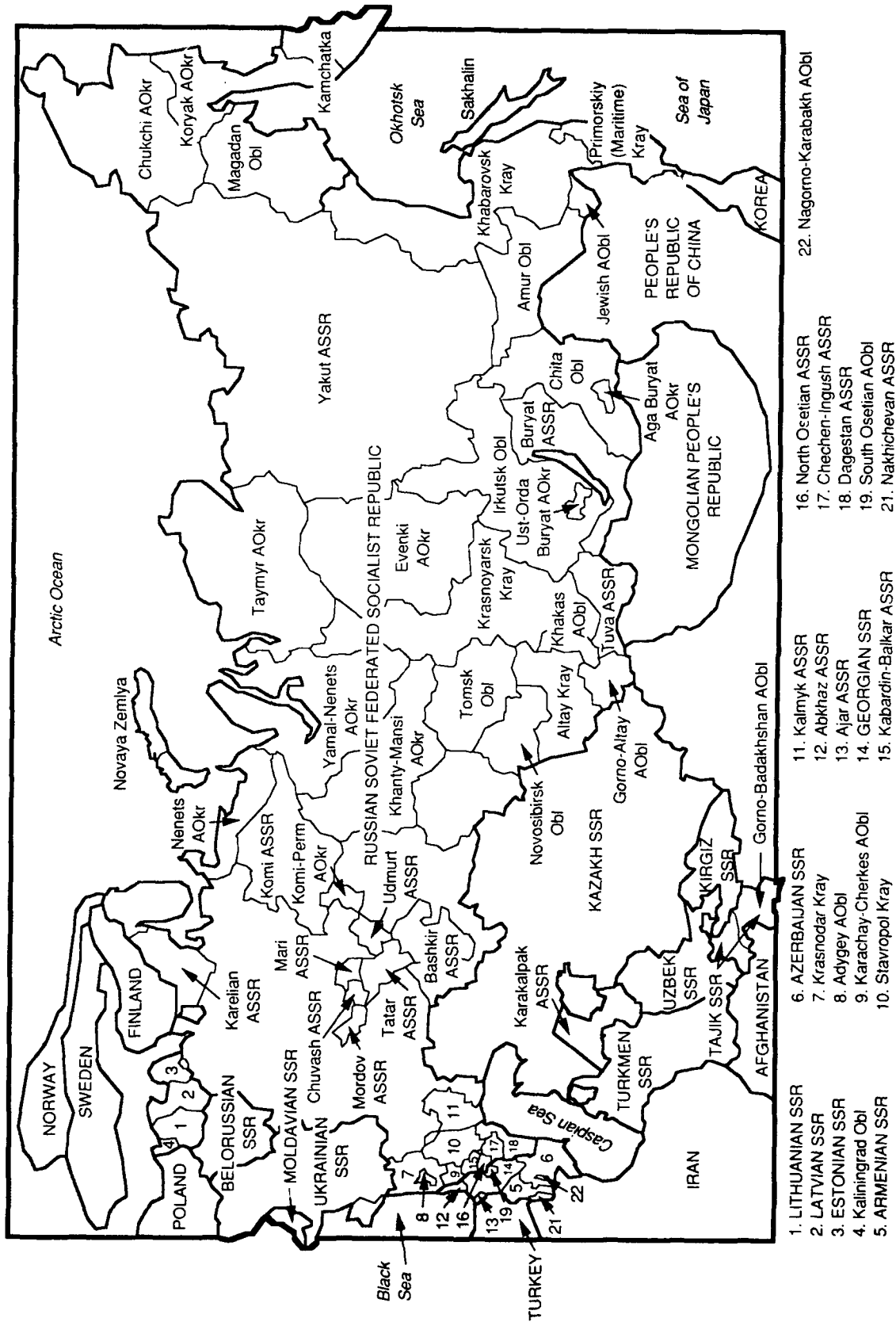
The Baltic republics and Moldavia were given the status of union republics, while territories acquired from Poland and Czechoslovakia were incorporated into the Belorussian and Ukrainian SSRs. All other new acquisitions were added to RSFSR, including the northern half of East Prussia, German since the thirteenth century, which was renamed Kaliningrad Oblast (see Fig. 2).⁹ The RSFSR's territorial and governmental structure remained essentially unchanged after World War II.

The federal character of the RSFSR is even more tenuous than that of the USSR as a whole, which had a federal system of government only in name. Until recently, the RSFSR lacked many of the governmental features and institutions of other union republics. The

⁷The huge Central Asian territory of Kazakhstan, originally the Kirgiz Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) of the RSFSR, became a union republic in 1936.

⁸The Soviet Union maintained neutrality toward Japan until the final days of World War II but quickly took advantage of its declaration of war not only to acquire Japanese territory but to occupy and loot Manchuria.

⁹The ethnic and territorial administrative structure of the RSFSR is discussed in Sec. II, "The Demography of the RSFSR," below. See also Paul B. Henze, *The Transcaucasus in Transition*, RAND, N-3212-USDP, 1991, especially Appendix A.



1. 1—Map of USSR showing ethnic subdivisions



- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Adygey AObl | 4. North Osetian ASSR | 8. Nagorno-Karabakh AObl |
| 2. Karachay-Cherkes AObl | 5. Chechen-Ingush ASSR | 9. Nakhichevan-ASSR |
| 3. Kabardin-Balkar ASSR | 6. South Osetian AObl | |

Fig. 2—Map of western USSR showing ethnic subdivisions

central government oversaw RSFSR territorial units directly, and it and the CPSU functioned for the most part as the government and communist party of the RSFSR as well. Most union republic ministries and the KGB did not have RSFSR counterparts, and there was no Russian academy of sciences. Only in 1990, as they have laid the basis for their own political life, have the Russians of the RSFSR begun to create an independent governmental structure and separate institutions of many kinds.

II. THE DEMOGRAPHY OF THE RSFSR

POPULATION

The RSFSR accounts for 76 percent of the territory of the Soviet Union and 51.5 percent of its population.¹ The vast, cold, thinly populated northern regions and the enormous expanses of Siberia and the Soviet Far East explain the contrast with the greater population density of the southern and western republics. The Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) alone occupies 18.2 percent of the RSFSR's territory but contains only .7 percent of its population. Though the development of mineral resources has brought a substantial influx of population into Siberia and the Soviet Far East during the past two decades, the regime has failed even to approach its goal of a large transfer of population to the eastern regions of the country.

The historic European Russian heartland has remained the center of gravity of the Russian population. But the population has stagnated, and many rural areas in European Russia have declined in population and economic status. At the same time, the largest cities, Moscow and Leningrad, have continued to grow despite extremely poor living conditions.

The population of the RSFSR was 147,001,621 in 1989, an increase of slightly more than nine and a half million, or 7 percent, since the 1979 census. Some 81.5 percent of the population is Russian. Russians, however, grew more slowly—5.5 percent—than many other nationalities. Three percent of the RSFSR population is Ukrainian and .8 percent Belorussian. Slavs thus make up 85.5 percent of the republic's population.

Ukrainians and Belorussians in the RSFSR increased at a much higher rate than Russians between 1979 and 1989, gaining 19.3 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively. The increases of these two Slavic groups, apparent also in many of the smaller ethnic units of the Soviet Union, are curious because in their home republics Ukrainians and Belorussians had an even slower rate of increase than Russians in the RSFSR, 2.4 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively.²

¹All population statistics unless otherwise specified are taken from 1989 census returns.

²In the USSR as a whole, Ukrainians and Belorussians increased by 4.2 percent and 6 percent, respectively, during the decade 1979-1989. Has there been a movement of Ukrainians and Belorussians to the RSFSR and other union republics? I offer a possible explanation of this phenomenon under the heading "Loss of Russian Self-Confidence?" in Sec. III, below.

With a population that is barely 15 percent non-Slavic—not quite 21 million—the RSFSR would appear to be much less subject to ethnic strain than the USSR as a whole. This is not the case, however, for several reasons:

- Many non-Slavic peoples with the highest rate of increase are located in strategically sensitive areas.
- The ethnic structuralism that has prevailed since the 1920s has produced so many anomalies and contradictions as to compel readjustment. In most northern regions, the concept of ethnic autonomy has become purely fictional.
- Many nationalities have no territorial base or cannot return to their original territories: e.g., the 841,000 Germans, 536,000 Jews, 153,000 Gypsies, 107,000 Koreans, and an undetermined number of Meskhetian Turks, Crimean Tatars, and Kurds who (in the case of the first two) have departed or who have been evacuated from Central Asia or (in the case of the Kurds) from Armenia.
- Some nationalities who have a territorial base live mostly outside it. The most extreme example is the Tatars, the most numerous and culturally advanced of the RSFSR's Muslims. Only 27 percent of them live in the Tatar ASSR; almost five million live outside it. Some 533,000 Armenians live in the RSFSR; their number increased by 46 percent during the past decade and has probably continued to grow rapidly because the compound disasters that Armenia has suffered during the past two years have caused more to leave.
- Some nationalities who possess their own union republics are making demands in behalf of their kinsmen living in the RSFSR, e.g., the Kazakhs. Of the 636,000 in the RSFSR, most live in areas adjacent to the Kazakh SSR.³

The RSFSR consists of 86 territorial units, including 6 krais (regions), 49 oblasts (provinces), 16 autonomous republics (ASSRs), 5 autonomous oblasts (AObls), and 10 autonomous okrugs, or districts (AOkrs). In European Russia, oblasts frequently correspond to traditional provinces (called *gubernia* in Tsarist times), and many whose capitals had been named for communist heroes are recovering their historic names. European Russia has only two krais: Krasnodar and Stavropol, which were historically North Caucasian frontier

³Kazakhs remain sensitive to Russians' appropriation of lands that they originally inhabited. See Charles Carlson, "Kazakhs Refute Russian Territorial Claims," *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 32, August 10, 1990.

regions dominated by Cossacks. The indigenous population has long since been largely absorbed or driven out.

In Siberia and the Soviet Far East, no clear principle distinguishes oblasts and krays, except that krays generally occupy areas of relatively recent settlement or expansion. Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, Chita, and the Amur region constitute huge oblasts several times the area of those of European Russia (see Fig. 1, above). Four other large areas are designated krays: the Altay and Krasnoyarsk in Siberia and the Maritime (Primor'ye) and Khabarovsk in the Far East.

The autonomous oblasts and autonomous okrugs are subordinated to krays and oblasts, an arrangement that casts doubt on their autonomy. In practice, some of the ASSRs appear to be subject to the same kind of subordination. More than half of the territory of the RSFSR—54 percent—consists of such autonomous entities, which vary so enormously in area, size of population, ethnic composition, and economic status that it is difficult to find common denominators among them, as Appendix tables A.7 and A.8 demonstrate.

AUTONOMOUS SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

In 10 of the RSFSR's 16 ASSRs, the titular nationality constitutes a minority. The titular nationality maintains a majority only in six: Chechen-Ingush (70.7 percent), Chuvash (67.7 percent), Dagestan (80.1 percent), Kabardin-Balkar (57.6 percent), North Osetian (52.9 percent), and Tuva (64.3 percent). Table 1 shows the ethnic composition of ten selected ASSRs in 1989.

Of the six ethnic-majority ASSRs, all but the Chuvash ASSR are border regions. Three—the Dagestan, Chechen-Ingush, and Kabardin-Balkar—are located in the North Caucasus and have Muslim majorities.⁴ North Osetia has a Muslim minority.⁵ Though Muslims constitute only 8 percent of the RSFSR's population, they increased by 17.2 percent during the past decade and will probably continue to exhibit a high growth rate. Like Muslims elsewhere in the USSR, they are increasingly assertive politically.

Tuva, historically known as Uriangkhai and claimed by China, has a basically Mongolian population.⁶ The Tuvan independence movement may in fact reflect awareness

⁴A North Caucasian Islamic Party was founded in August 1990. See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 36, September 7, 1990.

⁵Soviet censuses do not include data on religion. Fewer than 30 percent of Osetians are believed to be Muslims. See Alexandre Bennigsen and S. Enders Wimbush, *Muslims of the Soviet Empire*, C. Hurst, London, 1985, pp. 204-206.

⁶Out of sensitivity to Chinese claims as well as Mongol nationalism, the region was left a nominally independent "people's republic" after the Bolsheviks consolidated control of

Table 1

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF TEN ASSRS OF THE RSFSR
(1989 CENSUS)

ASSR	% Titular Nationality	% Russians	% Others
Bashkir	21.9	39.3	38.8
Buryat	24	69.9	6.1
Kalmyk	45.3	37.7	17
Karelian	10	73.6	16.4
Komi	23.3	46.5	30.2
Mari	43.2	47.5	9.3
Mordov	32.5	60.8	6.7
Tatar	48.5	43.3	7.2
Udmurt	30.9	58.8	8.3
Yakut	33.4	50.3	16.3

of the rapid political and economic liberalization that has occurred in the Mongolian People's Republic during the past year.⁷

The Chuvash ASSR is a special case. It is the most ethnically compact of the six ASSRs of the Volga-Ural (Idel-Ural) region, which also includes the Mordov, Mari, Tatar, Udmurt, and Bashkir ASSRs, and it is the only one in which the titular nationality has maintained numerical predominance. Even more Chuvash live outside their republic than in it, however, for the most part in neighboring regions.

Siberia and occupied Tuva *de facto*. Called Tannu Tuva and known to the outside world primarily for its unusual postage stamps, it experienced a sizable inflow of Russian colonists in the 1920s and 1930s and was provided with most of the trappings of a Soviet republic. The USSR formally annexed Tuva in 1944. Over four times the size of Switzerland, Tuva is a forested and high mountain region where the Yenisei River has its sources. For a good summary of its obscure history and Soviet machinations in the region during the 1920s and 1930s, see Walter Kolarz, *The Peoples of the Soviet Far East*, George Philip, London, 1954, pp. 161-169.

⁷In discussion at the National Endowment for Democracy in Washington on August 10, 1990, Oleg Rumyantsev commented: "We have to recognize that it is very difficult to move troops to Tuva and there is a very strong movement toward independence there, for Stalin simply annexed that territory in 1944. We must not think about how to stop secession but how to deal with it in practical terms." For additional information on tensions in Tuva, see Ann Sheehy, "Russians the Target of Interethnic Violence in Tuva," *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 37, September 14, 1990.

The inhabitants of three Volga-Ural republics—the Mari, Mordov, and Udmurt ASSRs—are of Finnish origin and were converted to Orthodoxy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; two—the Tatar and Bashkir ASSRs—are Turkic Muslim; the Chuvash speak an archaic form of Turkish but were also converted to Orthodoxy. The Chuvash regard themselves as direct descendants of the ancient Volga Bulgars, as do Tatar nationalists, some of whom have been agitating to change the name of their republic.⁸

All the Volga nationalities have been experiencing a resurgence of national feeling during the past few years and the process appears to be far from having run its course.⁹ The Chuvash ASSR declared its sovereignty on October 13, 1990.¹⁰

In the remaining ten ASSRs, the titular nationality is in a minority. In eight they are outnumbered by Russians alone.

The northeastern Yakuts, who look like Eskimos but speak a Turkic language, remained outside the range of influence of Islam, and some were converted to Orthodoxy. Though they are outnumbered by Russians, they have been exhibiting a strong sense of nationalism, which has taken economic form and attracted support from Russians living in the Yakut ASSR.

Yakutia has rich deposits of gold, platinum, diamonds, and other valuable minerals and is a major source of furs and timber. Like all Soviet peoples, Yakuts believe that they have realized only meager returns from exploitation of their natural resources.¹¹ They are increasingly concerned about the ecological damage that has resulted from careless mining operations. They have recently taken measures to retain a sizable portion of their mineral wealth for independent sale abroad. Like other inhabitants, both Russians and native peoples, they have realized the advantages of direct trade with, and investment from, Japan, Korea, and other Pacific Rim countries.

⁸See Azade-Ayse Rorlich, "Tatars or Bulgars?" in *Report on the USSR*, Radio Liberty, Munich, August 4, 1989, pp. 22-24. For background on the Chuvash see Walter Kolarz, *Russia and Her Colonies*, George Philip, London, 1952, pp. 46-48.

⁹See Charles Carlson, "Cheremiss Jump on Sovereignty Bandwagon," *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 45, November 9, 1990. Cheremiss is the traditional Russian name for the Mari.

¹⁰See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 44, November 2, 1990.

¹¹Yakuts began to debate a sovereignty declaration in July 1990. See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 32, August 10, 1990. Yakutia signed an economic agreement with a South Korean corporation on October 13, 1990; see *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 43, October 26, 1990.

AUTONOMOUS OBLASTS AND AUTONOMOUS OKRUGS

The distinction between the five autonomous oblasts (AObl) and the ten autonomous okrugs (AOkr) of the RSFSR seems illogical now that economic development has brought an enormous flow of workers and settlers into some of them. Ethnic imbalances and political and administrative contradictions in these areas have increased.

Of the autonomous areas in the RSFSR, all but two are located in the European north, Siberia, or the Soviet Far East. The two exceptions are the Adygey and Karachay-Cherkes autonomous oblasts of the North Caucasus. These ethnic areas were created to provide a place for the remnants of the once-dominant Circassian population of the Kuban and the western portion of the North Caucasus, the great majority of whom emigrated to the Ottoman Empire in the 1860s and 1870s, when they were finally subdued by Tsarist armies.¹² In both of these autonomous oblasts, the native Muslim population constitutes a minority, but has been increasing at a higher rate than Slavs. The Adygey Autonomous Oblast, which is part of Krasnodar Kray, declared itself an ASSR on October 7, 1990.¹³

Most of the Siberian, Far Eastern, and far northern autonomous regions show extraordinary ethnic disparities. In all but two—the Aga Buryat and Komi-Perm autonomous okrugs—Russians greatly outnumber the native nationality (see Table 2). The most extreme situations exist in the Khanty-Mansi and Yamal-Nenets autonomous okrugs, both part of Tyumen Oblast, where the in-migration of Russians and other nationalities connected with petroleum and natural gas development since the 1960s has made native populations tiny minorities.

The native peoples can hardly play a role in administration of such areas, nor do they receive any return for development of the natural resources of “their” territories. For the most part, they are numerically too weak to take advantage of their sovereignty, as the much more numerous Yakuts have been doing. Nevertheless, the Koryaks, who numbered only 9242 in the 1989 census, proclaimed their autonomous okrug an ASSR on October 9, 1990.¹⁴ The Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug quickly followed suit, declaring itself an autonomous republic on October 18, 1990.¹⁵

¹²For background on the Russian conquest of the Circassian lands, see Paul B. Henze, *The North Caucasus: Russia's Long Struggle to Subdue the Circassians*, RAND, P-7666, August 1990.

¹³See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 42, October 19, 1990.

¹⁴Ibid. Were the RSFSR Supreme Soviet to recognize this change, the Koryaks would come directly under the administration of the RSFSR, rather Kamchatka Oblast, as they are at present. The population of the Koryak Autonomous Okrug is 70 percent Slavic.

¹⁵See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 43, October 26, 1990.

Table 2

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF FAR NORTHERN, SIBERIAN
AND FAR EASTERN AUTONOMOUS REGIONS
(1989 CENSUS)

	% Titular Nationality	% Russians	% Others
Autonomous oblast			
Gorno-Altay	31.	60.4	8.6
Jewish	4.2	83.1	12.3
Khakas	11.1	79.4	9.5
Autonomous okrug			
Aga Buryat	54.9	40.8	4.3
Chukchi	7.3	66.1	24.6
Evenki	13.9	67.5	18.6
Khanty-Mansi	1.4	66.1	32.5
Komi-Perm	60.1	36.1	3.8
Koryak	16.5	62.	21.5
Nenets	11.9	65.8	22.3
Taymyr	13.4	66.9	19.7
Ust-Orda Buryat	36.1	56.5	7.4
Yamal-Nenets	4.2	59.	36.8

The enormous influx of settlers has created conditions that, in fact, have exacerbated long-deteriorating social conditions among indigenous eastern peoples. Most have given up their traditional livelihood of hunting, fishing, and trapping and have instead taken menial work around new settlements, where they spend much of their meager income on alcohol. This problem is far from unknown in Alaska, Canada, and Greenland, but the Soviet system has been particularly ill-suited to deal with it, as an analysis based on a recent Soviet Press report concludes:

Clearly, the dilemmas of Siberia's small peoples go well beyond the ordinary consequences of modernization and ethnic assimilation. The grievances now being documented in the Soviet press—poverty, rampant tuberculosis, unemployment, consignment to heavy manual labor, continued forced resettlement, and life expectancies on a level with those in the Third World—are all sad concomitants of the general trend towards extinction.¹⁶

¹⁶Kathleen Mihalisko, "SOS for Native Peoples of the North," *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, February 3, 1989, p. 6.

Birobijan, which became the Jewish Autonomous Oblast in the 1920s, remains the most peculiar of all the autonomous regions. Located in Khabarovsk Kray, in the bend of the Amur River on the Manchurian border, it was offered as a homeland for Jews from abroad, as well as from within the USSR. Almost as large as Switzerland in area, it appears to have considerable agricultural potential. However, its remoteness and the need to accommodate to the Soviet political and economic system severely limited its appeal to potential settlers. The few who came had great difficulty establishing themselves.

The Jewish population, never a majority, appears to have peaked during World War II at perhaps 50,000.¹⁷ Birobijan had only 214,085 inhabitants in 1989, of whom 83 percent were Russian and most of the remainder Ukrainian. Only 8,887 Jews lived there, down by 1,276 from 1979. One sees little reason for continued adherence to the fiction that it is a Jewish territory or has any potential to attract Jewish settlers. Unlike many autonomous regions where the native population is in a minority but nevertheless opposes loss of territorial entitlement, Soviet Jews show no interest in Birobijan.¹⁸

The 421,682 Buryats of the RSFSR, who are Mongols closely related to the dominant Khalkha Mongols of the Mongolian People's Republic (MPR), have not only "their own" ASSR, but two autonomous okrugs as well.¹⁹ They are actually a majority in the Aga Buryat Autonomous Okrug in southern Chita Oblast. The establishment of the autonomous okrugs to the east and west of the Buryat ASSR was originally motivated by Soviet reluctance to include the historic Siberian cities of Irkutsk and Chita in a larger Buryat ASSR; however, the perceived need to limit the potential threat of Pan-Mongol nationalism and Lamaist Buddhism also played a role.²⁰

¹⁷The history of Birobijan is summarized in Kolarz, *Russia and Her Colonies*, pp. 173-180.

¹⁸The number of "European" Jews in the Soviet Union declined by 21.8 percent during the past decade—from 1,751,366 in 1979 to 1,376,910 in 1989. This decline was slightly offset by sharp increases in the counts of Mountain, Georgian, and Central Asian Jews, from a 1979 total of 46,152 to 72,207 in 1989. The increase is probably due less to natural growth than to reclassification of individuals who were previously listed only as "Jews." The Jewish population of the RSFSR, which has accounted for slightly less than 40 percent of Soviet Jewry, declined by 22.8 percent during the decade, exhibiting essentially the same pattern as the Soviet Jewish population as a whole. The easing of emigration restrictions in 1989 and 1990 has resulted in an enormous outflow of Jews to Israel and other destinations. Unless emigration is again restricted, the Soviet Jewish population can be expected to continue to decrease rapidly.

¹⁹The 1989 census listed no Buryats in the USSR outside of the RSFSR. In the RSFSR, 80,779 lived outside Buryat autonomous areas in 1989.

²⁰See Kolarz, *Peoples of the Soviet Far East*, pp. 115-127.

Like all Mongols, Buryats have proved to be a vigorous people whose keen sense of identity survived collectivization and purges. They have taken advantage of opportunities to expand contacts with the MPR and have undoubtedly been encouraged by the political liberalization that has taken place there during the past year.²¹

The Mongols of the Soviet Union, Mongolia, and China have all retained pride in their history and are eager to restore closer economic, political, and cultural links. Buddhism, which is also resurgent, constitutes another bond among them and extends to the Kalmyks, the westernmost of all Mongols, whose ASSR in the North Caucasus was restored in 1958.²² Like other peoples who straddle Central Asian borders, they may become a problem for both the Soviet Union (or its successor states) and China in the twenty-first century.

²¹For political background and a description of the initial stages of the political and economic transformation that gained momentum during late 1989 and 1990 in the MPR, see Paul B. Henze, *Mongolia Faces Glasnost and Perestroika*, RAND, P-7598, October 1989. A movement for revising the Buryat-Mongolian frontiers developed in summer 1990. See "Buryat Intelligentsia Demands Review of Frontiers," *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 36, September 7, 1990. Buryatia was declared a sovereign republic on October 8, 1990; see *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 42, October 19, 1990.

²²For accounts of the remarkable extent to which religious life has revived among the Kalmyks, see "The Revival of Buddhism in Kalmykia," in *The Mongolia Society Newsletter*, Bloomington, Indiana, February 1991. The Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast, established November 4, 1920, became the Kalmyk ASSR October 20, 1935. The ASSR was abolished December 27, 1943, reconstituted as the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast January 9, 1957, and reorganized as the Kalmyk ASSR again July 29, 1958.

III. RUSSIA IN FLUX¹

REGIONALISM IN THE RSFSR

Awkward as some of them may be, the problems posed by autonomous ethnic units in the RSFSR are probably no more divisive than regionalism among Russians. The two issues are linked, of course, because administrative reorganization of the RSFSR, especially if it is directed toward making the republic a genuine federation with representative government based on semisovereign components, must both deal with the problem of illogical and anachronistic ethnically based areas and also reorganize purely or largely Russian areas into states or provinces with some resemblance to those of the United States or Canada.

Soviet political scientists and the new democratic politicians have for some time been debating several possible forms of reorganization of the country as a whole.² These debates may already be in the process of being overtaken by events, for movements toward assertion of sovereignty to the point of independence have been gaining momentum in almost all union republics.

Reorganizing the RSFSR poses even greater problems than reorganizing the USSR. Territorial reorganization must be dealt with in the new constitution of the RSFSR, but strong regional movements may already be preempting the process. Democratic forces in Leningrad have advocated autonomy, which they would extend to the whole northwestern region, where Russians see distinct advantages in forging a closer relationship with Scandinavia. The Karelian ASSR recently declared its sovereignty—a step that the small Karelian population could not have taken alone, if, indeed, the Karelian population is the prime mover. Russians living in the Karelian ASSR are just as likely to have initiated the declaration.³

¹This title comes from a classic work of modern Russian history: Sir John Maynard, *Russia in Flux*, Macmillan, New York, 1948.

²A representative of the Institute of Ethnography, USSR Academy of Sciences, speaking at a conference on the Transcaucasus in London, July 1990, described three alternatives for reorganizing the Soviet Union. See Paul B. Henze, *The Transcaucasus in Transition*, RAND, N-3212-USDP, 1991, p. 23.

³Karelia declared its sovereignty on August 10, 1990. See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 33, August 17, 1990.

Other centers of regional self-assertion among Russians include the following:

1. Sverdlovsk and neighboring oblasts in the highly industrialized and polluted Ural region. However, Boris Yeltsin, now the president of the RSFSR, comes from Sverdlovsk, and he may be able to contain this movement.
2. The region around Irkutsk, the historic capital of Siberia, where frustration at the failure of Moscow bureaucrats to create conditions favorable to Japanese investment in Siberia has generated a strong movement favoring direct initiative for arranging joint ventures and direct trading relationships with Japan and other Pacific Rim countries.⁴
3. The Far Eastern region shares the frustration of Siberians with centralized Moscow mismanagement of economic relationships. The experience of the Far Eastern Republic, a buffer state set up by the Bolsheviks for tactical reasons during the revolution to attract Russians in the region who did not sympathize with communism, is being studied. People in Tyumen, Khabarovsk, Vladivostok, and Sakhalin see and envy the speedy development enjoyed by all the countries of the Pacific Rim and the increasingly rewarding interrelationships among them.
4. The Yakuts' eagerness to profit from their own mineral resources has already been referred to above. This is not simply an ethnic phenomenon, however, for many Russians in Yakutia see a distinct advantage for themselves in encouraging Yakut aspirations and joining the movement for regional self-assertion.

LOSS OF RUSSIAN SELF-CONFIDENCE?

Oleg Rummyantsev, the young democratic activist and Yeltsin supporter, described the Russian predicament as follows:

The movement for sovereignty of Russia is not a separatist movement. It is concerned with developing interdependence. . . . There is no time to delay on questions of private property or joint ventures and economic reform. All this makes Russia one of the most important motors for renovating the Soviet Union as a whole. Russia has some responsibility for what happened in the

⁴Irkutsk oblast proclaimed its sovereignty within the RSFSR on October 26, 1990. See *Report on the USSR*, RFE/RL, Vol. 2, No. 44, November 2, 1990.

other republics. But Russia became lost in the [Soviet] imperial structure. Russian society must be made attractive for others. It is not attractive at all. There is no interchange of ideas [between Russians and other peoples]. But with an open society and an attractive people, Russia can attract others. Distrust and anger are now the characteristic features of everyday Soviet life. We want to restore respect for the Russian people.⁵

This frank diagnosis, while realistic, may also turn out to be overly optimistic, for the aversion to Russian culture and hatred of Russian domination runs very deep among the non-Russians of the Soviet empire and appears to be intensifying. Long-suppressed resentments can now be expressed openly. Manifestations of negative feelings toward Russians bring few penalties. Most non-Russians in the Soviet Union feel insulted if told that they look, think, act or react like Russians.

Russians are no longer sure of themselves. They cannot escape the awareness of other peoples' negative feelings toward them. Their reactions are reflected at one political extreme in the varied currents of opinion and controversies that have surfaced among Russian nationalists, including deeply conservative, obscurantist preoccupation with ancient Russian culture, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and conservative religious attitudes.

Larger numbers of Russians, however, appear sympathetic to leaders who advocate the revival of healthy Russian liberal and westernizing traditions. Some are convinced that Russian society must go through a thorough and profound process of cleansing and renewal to atone for the injustices that Russia has inflicted on both themselves and others. To regain their own confidence and pride and become attractive to non-Russians, as Rumyantsev hopes, Russians will have to make a success of democratic reform and achieve far-reaching social and economic renewal.

For some Russians the challenge is too daunting to accept. A minority is considering emigration. Some have been changing their identity. Census data document a phenomenon that is difficult to explain except as a widespread inclination by people who once considered themselves Russian to claim Ukrainian or Belorussian nationality. The tendency is particularly marked in (1) several RSFSR autonomous regions that have experienced large-scale in-migration during the past decade, (2) both Muslim union republics and Muslim autonomous areas of the RSFSR, and (3) many RSFSR autonomous areas where the titular nationality is in a minority and may be outnumbered by Russians.

⁵Discussion at the National Endowment for Democracy, Washington, D.C., August 10, 1990.

As an example of the first category, examine the data in Table 3 for four Siberian autonomous regions that have experienced a massive influx of settlers.

While Russians have increased in all these regions, Ukrainians and Belorussians have increased at a far higher rate. The latter two Slavic nationalities show no evidence of having a higher birth rate than Russians, and natural increase could not begin to account for 100 percent or greater growth in a single decade. Nor would Ukrainians and Belorussians be likely to be migrating from their home republics, or from other locations in the Soviet Union, at a high enough rate to account for much of the increase.

The most likely explanation for the extraordinary increase of Ukrainians and Belorussians throughout the Soviet Union is this: People who formerly classified themselves as Russians now take advantage of any factors—such as place of birth or a parent's birth—that enable them to claim Ukrainian or Belorussian nationality.⁶

In many predominantly Muslim areas, the 1989 census reveals a decline among Russians and a proportionate increase among Ukrainians or Belorussians or both (see Table 4). Only Kazakhstan is excepted: It has a large Russian settler population, though Kazakhs,

Table 3

SLAVIC POPULATION GROWTH IN FOUR SIBERIAN
AUTONOMOUS REGIONS, 1979-1989
(1989 CENSUS)

	Russians (%)	Ukrainians (%)	Belorussians (%)
Khanty-Mansi AOkr	100.	126.	268.
Khakas AObl	13.7	27.2	14.2
Taymyr AOkr	22.2	56.6	35.5
Yamal-Nenets AOkr	211.	441.	494.

⁶I experienced this phenomenon personally in 1988 at a conference in Europe on again meeting a scholar whom I had known for several years and taken for granted as a Russian. After an exchange of pleasantries he said, "You know, I am not Russian, though you have probably thought of me as Russian." I said I had. "I am actually Ukrainian," he continued and went on to recount his ancestry several generations back, which included a Polish grandmother, a Jewish great-grandmother and a great-great-grandfather who was a Turk. "There is really no Russian ancestry in my background," he concluded with a sense of obvious pride and the implication that it was better not to have Russian ancestors.

who increased 23.5 percent during the decade, moved ahead of Russians in total numbers. The modest Russian increase in Kazakhstan may reflect primarily natural increase.

In the three Slavic republics themselves, the titular nationality increased at a slower rate than one or both of the others. In the three Baltic republics, Ukrainians increased at a higher rate than Russians or Belorussians. In most other non-Muslim ethnic areas, the pattern of Slavic increase resembled that in Muslim areas. Where the Russian population increased, the Ukrainian and/or Belorussian population increased at a strikingly higher rate. In absolute numbers, of course, Russians still greatly outnumber the other two Slavic nationalities. In Armenia all Slavs decreased, but the proportionate decrease among Russians was much higher than that of the other two Slavic nationalities. See Table 5.

Table 4

SLAVIC POPULATION CHANGE IN SELECTED MUSLIM REPUBLICS
OF THE USSR, 1979-1989
(1989 CENSUS)

	Russians (%)	Ukrainians (%)	Belorussians (%)
Uzbek SSR	-8	+35.4	+66.4
Kazakh SSR	+3.9	-.2	+.6
Kirgiz SSR	+5	-1.2	+19.7
Tajik SSR	-2.1	+13.5	+37.
Turkmen SSR	-4.2	-3.5	+75.6
Azerbaijan SSR	-17.5	+22.5	+63.8
Tatar ASSR	+3.9	+14.9	+19.1
Dagestan ASSR	-12.4	+17.6	+14.3
Chechen-Ingush ASSR	-12.6	+5.1	+13.

Table 5

SLAVIC POPULATION CHANGE IN SELECTED NON-MUSLIM REPUBLICS
OF THE USSR, 1979-1989
(1989 CENSUS)

	Russians (%)	Ukrainians (%)	Belorussians (%)
RSFSR	+5.5	+19.3	+14.6
Ukrainian SSR	+8.3	+2.4	+8.3
Belorussian SSR	+18.2	+5.7	+4.4
Estonian SSR	+16.2	+33.9	+18.1
Latvian SSR	+10.2	+38.1	+7.4
Lithuanian SSR	+13.2	+38.8	+9.5
Moldavian SSR	+10.8	+7.	+40.1
Georgian SSR	-8.9	+14.3	+46.2
Armenian SSR	-26.7	-6.3	-10.5
Chuvash ASSR	+5.6	+19.3	+24.8
Buryat ASSR	+12.1	+49.6	+54.5
Yakut ASSR	+28.1	+66.5	+46.3

IV. CONCLUSION

Long frozen in a posture that is now officially and honestly termed a period of stagnation, the Soviet Union has entered an era of self-reinforcing and self-propelled ferment. Russia and the Russian people, the heart and moving force of the empire, are being as deeply shaken as any component. Even though it has a large Russian majority, the RSFSR must also cope with serious ethnic strain. Ethnic considerations interact with regional factors to complicate the task of political and economic reorganization and rejuvenation. All the groups competing for power and influence agree, however, that reorganization and rejuvenation cannot be avoided.

The RSFSR must undergo a far-reaching structural reorganization during the years ahead, and debate about it will intensify and at times take violent form. The recently established Russian Communist Party (RCP) will have to function among a wide spectrum of new parties and political coalitions. Some of these may develop more dynamism and appeal than the RCP, though it is too early to tell how this process will unfold. The communists have shown considerable ability to survive in provincial areas, and they are developing skill in manipulating ethnic considerations. How the new constitution that is currently being written will cope with ethnic and regional readjustment is not yet clear. A high degree of genuine federalism in the future organization of the RSFSR appears inevitable.

Many of the new Russian politicians appear to be reconciled to conceding independence to a few troublesome regions where leaders are determined to go their own way. Conceding economic and political autonomy to Russian-populated regions and permitting them to take the management of their affairs into their own hands will involve a contentious process. It is nevertheless questionable whether any central Russian government in Moscow can retain enough control to slow or stop such developments for long.

The Soviet military establishment and the KGB, both of which Russians have always dominated, continue to hold substantial residual power. The Russian-imperialist attitudes that predominate among the leadership of these organizations are in most respects antagonistic to the outlook of the new democratic forces that have taken over leadership of the RSFSR.

The military must contend with at least two lines of political cleavage: that among senior officers themselves and that between senior officers and middle- and lower-level officers. Continuing political and economic ferment in Russian society and episodes such as the January 1991 operations in Lithuania and Latvia appear to be exacerbating differences among military officers.

The breakdown of attitudes within the KGB may be less clear, but the actions of General Kalugin and his determination to pursue an independent course of political action despite Gorbachev's efforts to silence him demonstrates that the KGB is not a political monolith. Yeltsin has not given up his efforts to take control of KGB activities in the RSFSR.

The possibility of violent and conspiratorial moves by elements among the military and the KGB to stem political trends they consider dangerous will persist, but the likelihood that such moves could succeed for long is steadily declining as political ferment spreads and economic deterioration accelerates. Russia will continue to be in flux for a long time. The outcome is not yet predictable.

Appendix A

GEOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON THE RSFSR

The population data in the following tables were extracted and/or calculated from the official results of the 1989 USSR census.¹

Table A.1

POPULATION OF MAJOR ETHNIC GROUPS OF THE RSFSR, 1979-1989^a

	Population 1979	Population 1989	Change (%)	As % of 1989 Population of USSR RSFSR	
Russians	113,521,881	119,807,165	+5.5	82.6	81.5
Ukrainians	3,657,547	4,363,992	+19.3	9.9	3.0
Belorussians	1,051,900	1,205,887	+14.6	12.0	.8
All Slavs	118,231,328	125,377,044	+6.0	62.9	85.3
Muslims					
Tatars	5,005,757	5,519,605	+10.3	83.0	3.8
Bashkirs	1,290,994	1,345,231	+4.2	92.8	.9
Chechens	712,161	899,206	+26.3	93.8	.6
Kazakhs	518,060	636,083	+22.8	7.8	.4
Avars	438,306	543,666	+24.0	90.0	.4
Volga Region ^b					
Chuvash	1,689,847	1,771,047	+4.8	96.3	1.2
Mordvins	1,111,075	1,072,517	-3.5	93.0	.7
Udmurts	685,718	714,555	+4.2	95.7	.5
Mari	599,637	642,884	+7.2	95.9	.4
Others					
Armenians	364,570	532,675	+46.1	11.5	.4
Jews	692,311	536,422	-22.5	39.0	.4
Germans	790,762	840,980	+6.4	41.3	.6

^aNationalities with fewer than 500,000 in 1989 are not listed.

^bNon-Muslims.

¹See *Natsional' nyy sostav naseleniya* (National Composition of the Population), Part 2, USSR State Committee on Statistics, Informatsionno-izdatel'skiy tsentr, Moscow, 1989.

Table A.2
AREA AND POPULATION OF ETHNIC SUBDIVISIONS
OF THE RSFSR, 1989

	Area (sq mi)	Population 1989
Bashkir ASSR	55,430	3,943,113
Buryat ASSR	135,650	1,038,252
Chechen-Ingush ASSR	7,350	1,270,429
Chuvash ASSR	7,064	1,338,023
Dagestan ASSR	19,416	1,802,188
Kabardin-Balkar ASSR	4,825	753,531
Kalmyk ASSR	29,300	322,579
Karelian ASSR	66,564	790,150
Komi ASSR	160,540	1,250,847
Mari ASSR	8,955	749,332
Mordov ASSR	10,110	963,504
North Osetian ASSR	3,088	632,428
Tatar ASSR	26,250	3,641,742
Tuva ASSR	65,810	308,557
Udmurt ASSR	16,250	1,605,663
Yakut ASSR	1,197,760	1,094,065
Adygey AObl	2,934	432,046
Gorno-Altay AObl	35,740	190,831
Jewish AObl	13,895	214,085
Karachay-Cherkes AObl	5,442	414,970
Khakas AObl	23,855	566,861
Aga-Buryat AOkr	7,336	77,188
Chukchi AOkr	284,826	163,934
Evenki AOkr	296,370	24,769
Khanty-Mansi AOkr	201,969	1,282,396
Komi-Perm AOkr	12,703	158,526
Koryak AOkr	116,409	39,940
Nenets AOkr	68,224	53,912
Taymyr AOkr	332,857	55,803
Ust-Orda Buryat AOkr	27,954	135,870
Yamal-Nenets AOkr	289,690	494,844
Total autonomous areas	3,534,566	25,810,378
Total RSFSR	6,574,000	147,001,621
Total USSR	8,650,000	285,688,965

Table A.3

DEMOGRAPHICS OF ETHNIC SUBDIVISIONS OF THE RSFSR, 1989

	Titular Nationality	Russians	Others	Titular Nationality Outside Unit
RSFSR	119,807,165		27,194,456	25,264,385
Bashkir ASSR	863,808	1,548,291	1,531,014	585,654
Buryat ASSR	249,525	726,165	62,602	172,157 ^a
Chechen-Ingush ASSR	898,212	293,771	88,446	297,674
Chuvash ASSR	905,614	357,014	75,395	933,614
Dagestan ASSR	1,444,439	165,940	191,809	627,632 ^b
Kabardin-Balkar ASSR	433,886	240,721	78,924	49,536
Kalmyk ASSR	146,275	121,531	54,773	28,253
Karelian ASSR	78,910	581,570	129,670	52,447
Komi ASSR	291,542	721,780	237,525	53,465
Mari ASSR	323,999	355,973	69,360	346,278
Mordov ASSR	313,299	586,147	64,058	840,217
North Osetian ASSR	334,737	189,159	108,532	263,065
Tatar ASSR	1,765,404	1,575,357	300,981	4,880,184
Tuva ASSR	198,360	98,831	11,366	8,564
Udmurt ASSR	496,334	945,011	164,318	250,228
Yakut ASSR	365,236	550,263	178,586	17,019
Adygey AObl	95,439	293,640	42,967	29,502
Gorno-Altay AObl	59,130	115,188	16,513	12,187
Jewish AObl	8,887	177,968	27,230	1,368,023
Karachay-Cherkes AObl	168,976	175,923	70,071	39,520
Khakas AObl	62,875	450,018	53,968	18,553
Aga-Buryat AOkr	42,355	31,467	3,366	379,327 ^c
Chukchi AOkr	11,914	108,297	43,723	(d)
Evenki AOkr	3,445	16,718	4,606	(d)
Khanty-Mansi AOkr	18,389	847,970	416,037	(d)
Komi-Perm AOkr	95,329	57,272	5,925	56,745
Koryak AOkr	6,572	24,773	8,595	(d)
Nenets AOkr	6,423	35,489	12,000	(d)
Taymyr AOkr	7,373	37,345	11,085	(d)
Ust-Orda Buryat AOkr	49,023	76,827	10,020	372,659
Yamal-Nenets AOkr	20,917	292,060	181,867	(d)
Total autonomous areas	9,767,627	11,798,479	4,255,332	10,907,986

^aIncludes Buryat population of Aga-Buryat and Ust-Orda Buryat autonomous okrugs.

^bDagestan is home to ten indigenous nationalities.

^cIncludes those who live in the Buryat ASSR; thus, 340,903 Buryats live in the three autonomous areas and 80,779 live outside.

^dUSSR census returns do not include separate figures for the small northern peoples, who together totaled 197,345 in 1989. Of these, 75,033 lived in autonomous areas designated for them and 122,312 lived outside.

Table A.4
MUSLIMS OF THE RSFSR, 1979-1989^a

	1979	1989	Growth (%)
Uzbeks	72,385	127,169	75.7
Kazakhs	518,060	636,083	22.8
Azeris	152,421	336,908	121.0
Kirgiz	15,011	43,083	187.0
Tajiks	17,863	38,327	114.6
Turkmen	22,979	39,738	72.9
Avars ^b	438,306	543,666	24.0
Aguls ^b	11,752	17,765	51.2
Balkars	61,828	78,377	26.8
Bashkirs	1,290,994	1,345,231	4.2
Dargins ^b	280,444	353,326	26.0
Ingush	165,997	215,085	29.6
Kabardans	318,822	385,868	21.0
Kumyks ^b	225,800	277,162	22.7
Laks ^b	91,412	106,258	16.2
Lezgins ^b	202,854	257,312	26.8
Nogays ^b	58,639	73,901	26.0
Rutuls ^b	14,835	19,631	32.3
Tabasarans ^b	73,433	94,030	28.0
Tatars	5,005,757	5,519,605	10.3
Tsakhurs ^b	4,774	6,536	36.9
Chechens	712,161	899,206	26.3
Adygeys	107,239	123,007	14.7
Karachays	125,792	149,663	19.0
Cherkeses	44,572	50,753	13.9
Abazas	28,800	32,893	14.5
Crimean Tatars	5,165	21,465	316.6
Arabs	2,339	4,587	96.1
Afghans	184	1,549	741.8
Dungans	1,159	635	-45.2
Kurds	1,631	4,909	201.0
Persians	1,747	2,669	52.8
Turks	3,561	9,926	178.7
Uigurs	1,707	2,573	50.7
Total ^c	10,080,423	11,818,896	17.2

NOTE: Muslims constituted 7.34% of the RSFSR population in 1979 and 8.04% in 1989. Their 10-year growth rate—17.2 percent—was over three times that of the Russian population, which increased only 5.5%. The Chinese Muslim Dungans were the only Muslim group to decline. The decline appears to be an anomaly, however, as the Dungans

in the USSR as a whole increased from 51,694 in 1979 to 69,686 in 1989; this growth of 34.8 percent is in the same high range as that of the Central Asians among whom most of them live. The unusually high growth rates of all Central Asians and Azeris in the RSFSR appear to be due primarily to in-migration, for there have been no concentrated settlements of these peoples in Russian territory. The Kazakhs, in contrast, are part of the indigenous population of the southern Urals, especially Orenburg Oblast, and their population gain appears to result from natural increase.

^aPartially Muslim ethnic groups, including the Abkhaz, Osetes, and Tats, are not listed in the table because of lack of specific data on the proportion of Muslims among them.

^bPeoples of Dagestan.

^cIf Muslims have continued to increase at the same rate as in the previous decade, the Muslim population of the RSFSR will have reached 12,225,466 in early 1991.

Table A.5

ETHNIC DYNAMICS OF KHANTY-MANSI AUTONOMOUS OKRUG, 1979-1989^a

Ethnic Group	Population in 1979	Population in 1989	Growth (%)	As % of Pop. in 1989
Khanty	11,219	11,827	5.4	
Mansi	6,156	6,562	6.6	
Total natives	17,375	18,389	5.8	1.4
Russians	423,792	847,970	100.1	66.1
Ukrainians	45,484	148,317	226.1	11.6
Belorussians	7,555	27,775	267.6	2.2
Total Slavs	476,831	1,024,062	114.8	79.9
Tatars	36,898	97,689	164.8	7.6
Bashkirs	7,522	31,151	314.1	2.4
Chuvash	4,739	13,959	194.6	1.1
Azeris	1,263	12,846	917.1	1.0
Moldavians	1,735	10,406	499.8	.8
Germans	3,499	8,929	160.4	.7
Mordvins	3,155	7,107	125.3	.6
Mari	1,791	5,801	223.9	.5
Total population of Khanty-Mansi AOkr	570,763	1,282,396	124.7	

^aNationalities with fewer than 5000 in 1989 are not listed.

Table A.6

ETHNIC DYNAMICS OF DAGESTAN ASSR, 1979-1989

Ethnic Dagestanis	Population		Growth (%)	Total in USSR 1989	% in Dage- stan
	1979	1989			
Avars	418,634	495,721	18.4	604,202	82.
Aguls	11,459	13,791	20.4	19,936	69.2
Dargins	246,854	280,431	13.6	365,797	76.7
Kumyks	202,297	231,805	14.6	282,178	82.1
Laks	83,457	91,682	9.9	118,386	77.4
Lezgins	188,804	204,370	8.2	466,833	43.8
Nogays	24,977	28,294	13.3	75,564	37.4
Rutuls	14,288	14,955	4.7	20,672	72.3
Tabasarans	71,722	78,196	9.	98,448	79.4
Tsakhurs	4,560	5,194	13.9	20,055	25.9
Total natives	1,267,052	1,444,439	14.	2,072,071	69.7
Non-Dagestanis in Dagestan ASSR	Population		Change (%)	As % of 1989 Population	
	1979	1989			
Russians	189,474	165,940	-12.4	9.2	
Ukrainians	6,869	8,079	+17.6	.4	
Belorussians	1,229	1,405	+14.3	.07	
Total Slavs	197,572	175,424	-11.2	9.7	
Azeris	64,514	75,463	+17.	4.2	
Chechens	49,227	57,877	+17.6	3.2	
Tatars	5,584	5,473	-2.	.3	
Other Muslims	2,749	4,428	+61.1	.2	
Total non-Dag Muslims	122,074	143,241	+17.3	7.9	
Armenians	6,463	6,260	-3.1	.3	
Jews	18,721	10,039	-46.4	.6	
Tats	7,437	12,939	+74.	.7	
Others	8,840	18,846	+113.2	1.	
Total population of Dagestan	1,628,159	1,802,188	+10.7		